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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1128
INFO RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 000360

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
PLEASE PASS TO PM/DTCC KYLE M BALLARD

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ETTC](#) [KOMC](#) [GT](#)
SUBJECT: Guatemala Response to Blue Lantern Level 3: Pre License
End-Use Check on License 050207380 ARMSA

REF: STATE 4082

¶1. (SBU) Summary: In response to reftel, EmbOffs researched the bona fides of the arms

import company ARMSA Guatemala S.A. The research included an on-site inspection of ARMSA, an interview with the company's owner, and record checks of both the company and the owner with the Ministry of Defense's (MOD) General Directorate for the Control of Firearms and Ammunition (DIGECAM). As a result of the investigation, Post recommends approval of reftel license. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Alejandro Alvarez Abularach is ARMSA's principal shareholder and owner and began

his business in December 2009. Alvarez's main investor, Jorge Rodrigo Asturias Midence and his family, own the building where the store is located. The building, a former collection of dance clubs and commercial stores has been recently renovated, and now contains a smaller collection of retail and small businesses including a franchise motorcycle dealer and an internet company. With over 15 years in the weapons industry, Alvarez's store, business practice and plans for future expansion (which include the addition of an 18-lane shooting range) convinced EmbOffs that Alvarez is a serious businessman engaged in legitimate entrepreneurial activities within the Guatemalan weapons industry. His retail store appears secure and includes three sets of steel bar gates (two upon entering and one over the showcase), as well as robust electronic and structural security measures. Alvarez's business will be distribution-based primarily with small sales to collectors, hunters and individuals in the city only. At the present time, Alvarez sells non-U.S. purchased weapons and makes around USD 20,000 per month in sales.

¶3. (SBU) Per reftel, Alvarez stated that he is familiar with the regulations governing the import

of U.S.-origin defense articles, including restrictions on unauthorized re-transfer or re-export.

¶4. (SBU) ARMSA has a satisfactory record with the MOD's DIGECAM and has

passed all routine inspections without incident. According to DIGECAM, ARMSA is a small-scale but well-managed weapons store that is operating within local laws and regulations.
MCFARLAND